

On behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District of North Carolina, we congratulate Landis, North Carolina on its centennial celebration. We offer our best wishes for much prosperity and success during the century to come.

IN HONOR OF SFC TOYA D. KING-
JOHN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to honor the 18-year commitment of SFC Latoya King-John of Brooklyn, NY. Ms. King-John is currently serving in the United States Army Reserve. From 1996–1997, Ms. King-John served in Operation Joint Venture; leaving her husband and two young children while she worked as a movement control supervisor in Bosnia, Croatia, and Hungary.

In addition, Ms. King-John has worked for New York State for the past 17 years. While there she has been an active member of the Civil Service Employees Association, where she has served on the Education Committee of Local 351. Also, Ms. King-John is a member of the Non-Commissioned Officers Association. In 1999, Ms. King-John was recognized by the Disabled American Veterans.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. King-John has served this country for nearly two decades at great personal sacrifice; she has served New York State for nearly two decades as well. As such, she is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today, and I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in honoring this truly remarkable woman.

SUPPORT OF THE LABOR FIRST CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS ACT

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Labor Relations First Contract Negotiations Act.

The National Labor Relations Act guarantees the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively to improve living standards and working conditions. The right to organize is a basic civil right, and unions are an avenue to equity, fair treatment, and economic stability for working people. Free enterprise includes the freedom to organize as a unit to bargain collectively. Often, current law hinders this ability. That is why I have introduced the Labor Relations First Contract Negotiations Act.

This bill requires mediation and, if necessary, binding arbitration of initial contract negotiation disputes. Under this proposed bill, if an employer and a newly elected representative have not reached a collective bargaining agreement within 60 days of the representative's certification, the employer and the representative will jointly select a mediator to help them reach an agreement. If they cannot agree on a mediator, one will be appointed for them by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. In the event that the parties do

not reach an agreement in 30 days, the remaining issues may be transferred to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for binding arbitration.

Let's make sure that everyone has a fair opportunity to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HOME- OWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES AND EDU- CATORS ACT

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, today, along with my colleague Representative LEACH and a number of other Members of the House, I will be introducing the Homeownership Opportunities for Uniformed Services and Educators Act, also known as the "HOUSE Act."

The HOUSE Act authorizes 1% down payment FHA mortgage loans for prekindergarten through 12th grade teachers, policemen, and firemen buying a home within the school district or local employing jurisdiction. This significantly reduces the down payment hurdle. For example, the down payment on a \$132,000 home would be lowered from around \$6,270 to only \$1,320. In higher cost areas the effect would be more dramatic.

Moreover, for qualified borrowers, the bill defers the 1.5% up-front FHA premium that FHA customarily charges, which currently ranges from \$1,980 to \$3,590, depending on the size of the loan. Moreover, this deferred fee is reduced by 20% for each year of public service in the community, and entirely waived after five years of continued service.

Down payment and loan fee reductions will have the effect of helping school districts and localities recruit and retain qualified teachers, policemen and firemen. It will also make it easier for these public servants to buy a home within the community they work. And, the bill's premium waiver feature provides an incentive for continued public service in the local community.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has estimated that the bill would generate 125,000 new loans to teachers, policemen, and firemen over the next five years. CBO also determined that the bill would actually increase the federal budget surplus by \$162 million over the same period.

This legislation is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and the American Association of School Administrators.

Moreover, the bill enjoys bi-partisan support, and was in fact passed by the House last year, as Section 203 of H.R. 1776. Unfortunately, it died when the House and Senate failed to reach agreement. I urge my colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this important legislation, so that we may enact it into law this year.

HONORING ASSEMBLYMAN DENIS
BUTLER

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Assemblyman Denis Butler for his twenty-four years of elected service on behalf of the people of Queens. The Powhatan and Pocahontas Regular Democratic Club will honor Butler again next week for his tremendous advocacy for youth, senior citizens, veterans and the disabled.

Assemblyman Butler was first elected to the New York State Assembly in April of 1976, and enjoyed victories in every Assembly race since then. During his twenty-four years in the Assembly, Mr. Butler moved up the ranks to become an Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore, to which he was appointed in 1993. Assemblyman Butler previously held the positions of Vice-Chairman of the Majority Conference, Chairman of the Majority Conference and Chairman of the Committee on Standing Committees. He was also a member of the Executive Committee of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments.

As Chairman of the Queens Assembly Delegation, Assemblyman Butler has been an unfailing advocate for Astoria and Long Island City, successfully securing hundreds of thousands of dollars for numerous recreational, cultural, educational, civic, youth, anticrime and senior programs throughout Queens.

In 1998, Assemblyman Butler received the Brooklyn Diocese's Pro Vita award, presented to him by Bishop Francis J. Mugavero in recognition of his efforts on behalf of the unborn. In 1992, he was the recipient of the New York State Catholic Conference Public Policy Award, presented by John Cardinal O'Connor and the Bishops of New York State. Assemblyman Butler was the driving force behind the Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation, a non-for-profit statewide organization that promotes alternatives to abortion, successfully securing approximately 17 million dollars for the Foundation since 1983.

Assemblyman Butler is Vice-Chairman of the Queens Democratic County Committee and for thirty years was the Executive Member of the Powhatan Regular Democratic Club, one of the oldest clubs in New York State. In conjunction with the Powhatan and Pocahontas Clubs, Assemblyman Butler was the organizer for the last twenty-nine years of annual Toys for Tots Drive for the needy.

Mr. Butler is a lifelong resident of the District he represented, covering Astoria, Long Island City and Jackson Heights. A graduate of La Salle Academy and Cathedral College, Assemblyman Butler also attended St. Joseph's Seminary, Columbia University and the State University at Albany. Prior to his election to the New York State Assembly, Mr. Butler, who holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree, was an account executive and sales manager on the field of broadcasting, both in radio and television.

Married to former Mary Kerr, Assemblyman Butler and his lovely wife have three children: Kathleen, a health care administrator; Denis, an attorney; and Thomas, President of Butler Associates, a Manhattan based Public Relations and Marketing Firm.